

Message Text

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ACTION EB-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-08 EA-06 ARA-06 NSC-05
NSCE-00 INR-05 TRSE-00 OMB-01 IGA-01 CIAE-00 PA-01
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R 251820Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3170

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY BERN

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY BONN

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 15422

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EFIN, PO, FR, US

SUBJ: FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR PORTUGAL

REF: STATE 117741

1. WE SHARE DEPARTMENT'S HESITANCY AS REGARDS FURTHER
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EMBASSY DEMARCHES AT QUAI AND FINANCE MINISTRY AT THIS
STAGE AND CONSIDER IT PREFERABLE FOR UNDER SECRETARY
SOLOMON TO MAKE NEXT APPROACH TO FRENCH OFFICIALS
DURING CIEC MINISTERIAL NEXT WEEK. THIS IS PARTICULARLY
THE CASE, SINCE SOME QUESTION REMAINS IN OUR MIND TO
WHAT EXTENT GISCARD PERSONALLY HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN
APPROVING HARD POSITION FRENCH MINISTRIES SEEM TO HAVE

ADOPTED ON PORTUGUESE AID ISSUE. HIGH-LEVEL CONTACTS
IN CONTEXT SECRETARY'S VISIT NEXT WEEK MAY THEREFORE
BE BEST NEXT STEP.

2. SOME UNCERTAINTY REGARDING GISCARD'S PERSONAL ATTITUDE HAS BEEN RESTIMULATED BY FAIRLY LONG CONVERSATION GISCARD INITIATED WITH PORTUGUESE AMBASSADOR MARTINS AT DIPLOMATIC DINNER AT ELYSEE MAY 24. GISCARD VOLUNTEERED APPARENTLY SINCERE DISTRESS AT REPORTS WHICH HAD REACHED HIM THAT PORTUGUESE CONSIDER THAT "FRANCE WAS NOT DOING ENOUGH FOR THEM"; REITERATED FRANCE'S SUPPORT "IN PRINCIPLE" FOR PORTUGUESE ADMISSION TO THE EC, BUT THEN SEEMED ONLY VAGUELY INFORMED WHEN AMBASSADOR RAISED ISSUE OF AID CONSORTIUM AS EXAMPLE OF AT TIMES LESS THAN HELPFUL FRENCH POSITION. IN REPLY GISCARD ONLY URGED AMBASSADOR TO SEEK EARLY APPOINTMENT WITH ELYSEE SECRETARY GENERAL FRANCOIS-PONCET WHICH AMBASSADOR IS DOING, AND SUGGESTED IN GENERAL TERMS THERE MAY BE "MISUNDERSTANDINGS." AMBASSADOR REMAINS UNSURE TO WHAT EXTENT GISCARD WAS MAKING A SIGNIFICANT GESTURE OR WAS ONLY BEING POLITE. HE WILL, NEVERTHELESS, MAKE THIS FURTHER TRY SINCE HE IS CONVINCED THAT BASIC OPPOSITION TO A FRENCH CONTRIBUTION TO AID TO PORTUGAL COMES FROM PRIME MINISTER BARRE AND SENIOR ECONOMIC OFFICIALS AT QUAI AND FINANCE MINISTRY, AND THAT ONLY HIGHEST LEVEL DECISION IS NOW LIKELY TO HAVE ANY CHANCE OF REVERSING THESE POSITIONS.

3. IN PROJECTED MEETING WITH FRANCOIS-PONCET,
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AMBASSADOR SAYS HE INTENDS TO EXPRESS APPRECIATION FOR GISCARD'S HELPFUL REMARKS. HE WILL THEN STRESS THAT BARRE'S RECENT DECISION TO "ENCOURAGE" FOREIGN WORKERS TO RETURN TO THEIR HOMELANDS (WHICH IS TO BE IMPLEMENTED IN STAGES CONFORMING TO NEEDS OF FRENCH ECONOMY'S RECOVERY IN COMING MONTHS) COULD ADD HEAVY NEW BURDEN FOR PORTUGAL, WHICH CURRENTLY HAS ABOUT 800,000 CITIZENS LIVING IN FRANCE. THUS A SMALL FRENCH AID CONTRIBUTION WOULD ONLY BE BALANCING GESTURE. AMBASSADOR WILL ALSO REFER TO FEARS THAT HE MAY NOT BE ABLE RESTRAIN GOP MUCH LONGER FROM OPTING FOR GERMAN RATHER THAN FRENCH TV SYSTEM, A MOVE WHICH COULD FURTHER STRAIN THAT SITUATION.
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